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UNCLAS HARARE 000549

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/PDPA FOR DALTON, MITCHELL AND SIMS
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: DAILY NEWS REACTS TO COMMONWEALTH EXTENSION OF
ZIMBABWE'S SUSPENSION

¶1. Under headline "Extension of suspension is a victory for sanity" the independent daily "The Daily News" dedicated its March 18 editorial to hailing Zimbabwe's suspension from the councils of the Commonwealth for a further nine months, saying it is "a victory of sanity over the tragically misguided African solidarity" that had advocated for the readmission of Zimbabwe. Excerpts:

¶2. "The entire civilized world must have heaved a collective sigh of relief at the news that Zimbabwe's suspension from the Commonwealth councils will remain in place until the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Nigeria in December. Not only has the decision pulled back the Commonwealth from the brink of a debilitating polarization, or even disintegration, which the adoption of Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo's recommendation was almost certainly going to cause. But it is also a victory of sanity over the tragically misguided African solidarity, which had influenced the recommendation in the first place. . . ."

SULLIVAN